

Remarks/Arguments

Reconsideration of this application is requested.

Request for Continued Examination

A request for continued examination (RCE) is enclosed in response to the final Office Action mailed on January 24, 2008, and Advisory Action dated April 11, 2008. In this regard, applicant notes that the April 11, 2008 Advisory Action declined to enter applicant's proposed amendment of March 24, 2008. Applicant has now prepared and encloses a new amendment in response to the January 24, 2008 final Office Action, and requests that it be entered and considered in its entirety.

Claim Status

Claims 1-20 are pending. Claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 8-11, 13 and 20 are amended.

Claims Rejections – 35 USC 102(b) - Yamamoto

Claims 1-10, 12 and 19 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Yamamoto (US 7,167,258). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections.

Claims 1-8 and 19

The present invention is directed to an image scanning device that outputs scanned image information to a network, an image output device that outputs image information, and an information processing device that accepts the scanned image information and outputs image information to the image output device under a common protocol. Importantly, the image output device is connected directly only to the image scanning device. The image output device is not directly connected to the information processing device, but is connected to the information processing device via the image scanning device. For example, applicant's FIG. 1 discloses a PC 3 in communication with printer 2 via scanner 1 such that printer 2 is directly connected only to scanner 1. Printer 2 is not directly connected to PC 3, but is connected to PC 3 via scanner 1. In this manner, the present invention reduces the number of ports in a hub 8 and provides a copying process without a PC (see specification, paragraphs 0043 and 0006).

Claim 1 is amended to emphasize this feature. In particular, in addition to reciting that the image output device is connected directly only to the image scanning device, claim 1 is further amended to recite:

...the image output device is not directly connected to the information processing device, but is connected to the information processing device via the image scanning device...

Independent claim 2 is amended in similar fashion.

In Yamamoto, by contrast, printer 300 (image output device) is not connected to computer 400 (information processing device) via scanner 200 (image scanning device), as is required by claims 1 and 2, but is directly connected to computer 400 via LAN 10.

Claims 1 and 2 further recite that the image scanning device has two ports: a port (7-1) for connecting the image output device and a port (7-2) for connecting the information processing device. In Yamamoto, by contrast, scanner 200 is connected to both printer 300 and computer 400 via LAN 10. Thus, scanner 200 merely includes one port for connecting the LAN cable, and not individual ports for connection to the image output device and information processing device as is required by claims 1 and 2.

Claims 1 and 2 also include the following limitation:

...means for controlling to analyze destination information of data input from the ports and to switch connections of the ports in accordance with the destination information.

The Action asserts that Yamamoto discloses this feature at column 15, lines 29-35. Applicant strongly disagrees. This passage of Yamamoto describes a “Send-Transmission-Mode” and states that “either this device or a transmission destination device can take the initiative in controlling data transfer”. This passage is not relevant to analysis of destination information of data input from the ports

and switching connections of the ports based on that destination information, as is required by claims 1 and 2. Should the Examiner maintain this position, clarification is respectfully requested.

Claims 4-6 and 8 are amended to depend from claim 2. Since Yamamoto does not disclose each and every feature of claims 1 and 2, it cannot anticipate those claims or claims 3-8 and 19 dependent thereon. The rejections of claims 1-8 and 19 under 35 USC 102(b) should therefore be withdrawn.

Claims 9, 10, and 12

Like claims 1 and 2, claims 9, 10 and 12 recite an image scanning device that has two ports: a port for connecting the image output device and a port for connecting the information processing device. As discussed above, Yamamoto's scanner 200 is connected to both printer 300 and computer 400 via LAN 10, and thus includes just one port for connecting the LAN cable, and not individual ports for connection to the image output device and information processing device. Thus, claims 9, 10 and 12 distinguish over Yamamoto for at least this reason.

Moreover, claim 9 further recites:

means for controlling to output scanned image information from the first port via the network to the image output device in a copying process, and when receiving a network printing request from the network through the second port during the copying process, to receive and accumulate print data until a means for storing reaches a prescribed accumulation amount, and when the means for storing reaches the prescribed accumulation amount, to transmit to the information processing device, data instructing to interrupt or suppress the transmission of the print data...

Claim 10 contains a similar recitation but differs in that scanning is stopped when the means for storing reaches a prescribed accumulation amount. Scanning is restarted when the available capacity in the means for storing recovers by process of the network printing process. After an end of the network printing process, the

accumulated scanned image data is outputted from the first port via the network to the image output device.

Claim 12 contains a similar recitation and recites that when receiving a network printing request from the network through the second port during the copying process, print data is received and accumulated until a means for storing reaches a predetermined accumulation amount. When the means for storing reaches the prescribed accumulation amount, data instructing to interrupt or suppress transmission of the print data is transmitted to the information processing device.

With respect to these features, the Action cites column 11, lines 20-35 of Yamamoto as teaching a CPU 301 of a laser beam printer 300 having control access to connected devices. The control program can be stored externally in storage device 305. Printer 300 communicates with a host computer under the control of CPU 301 and notifies the host computer of information in the printer. Thus, this passage of Yamamoto describes control of printer 300 (the image output device), and not control of the image scanning device as is required by claims 9, 10 and 12.

The disclosure of CPU 301 controlling access of printer 300 to other devices fails to disclose specific instructions recited in claims 9, 10 and 12 such as the interruption or suppression of print data. Therefore, Yamamoto does not teach a CPU 301 performing the functions specified in claims 9, 10 and 12, which must be shown to anticipate those claims.

Since Yamamoto does not disclose each and every element of claims 9, 10 and 12, it cannot anticipate those claims. The rejections under 35 USC 102(b) should accordingly be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 103(a) – Rosenlund

Claims 11 and 16 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over Yamamoto in view of Rosenlund (US 6,738,155). Claims 17 and 18 are rejected as obvious over Yamamoto in view of Rosenlund and Danknick (US 6,856,416). In response, applicant traverses the rejections.

Claims 11 and 16 are directed to an image scanning device having first and second ports to connect to an image output device and information processing device. As discussed above, Yamamoto's scanning device 200 has just one port and not two ports as required by claims 11 and 16.

Claims 11 and 16 further recite that print data received from a network through the second port in a network printing process is output from the first port via the network to the image output device. When a copying instruction is input during the network printing process, an image is scanned and accumulated as scanned image data until a prescribed accumulation amount is stored. When the prescribed accumulation amount is reached, the scanning speed is decreased, and when an available capacity of storage recovers by the progress of the network printing process, the scanning speed increases. After an end of the network printing process, the accumulated scanned image data is output from the first port via the network to the image output device.

Rosenlund clearly does not operate in this manner. Rosenlund is directed to hierarchical storage management (HSM) system 120 that archives electronic files. HSM system 120 is RAID and SAN capable and can store greater than a terabyte of data. RAID allows for the storage and retrieval of high resolution images or other large files (see col. 6, lines 4-14). However, the switching of scanning speeds of an image scanning device is not provided by the storage system of Rosenlund. The mere disclosure of a storage system fails to teach the relationship between the scanning device and storage system. Danknick is directed to allocating print jobs among a plurality of printers and does not remedy the deficiencies of Rosenlund in this regard.

Since Yamamoto, Rosenlund and Danknick do not disclose or suggest each and every element of claims 11 and 16, these claims and claims 17 and 18 dependent thereon are not obvious over Yamamoto, Rosenlund and Danknick. The rejections under 35 USC 103(a) of claims 11 and 16-18 should therefore be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 103(a) – Maeda

Claims 13 and 20 are rejected as obvious over Yamamoto in view of Maeda (US 6,557,033). Claims 14 and 15 are rejected as obvious over Yamamoto in view of Maeda, and Danknick. In response, applicant traverses the rejections and amends claims 13 and 20 to further distinguish over Yamamoto, Maeda and Danknick.

Claims 13 and 20, as amended, recite that the image output device is connected directly only to the image scanning device, and that the image output device is not directly connected to the information processing device, but is connected to the information processing device via the image scanning device. As discussed in detail with respect to claims 1 and 2, Yamamoto fails to disclose this feature. Maeda does not remedy the deficiencies of Yamamoto in this regard.

Maeda discloses a printer-scanner composite apparatus 100 connected to a PC 402. A detachable printer head 302 and scanner head 303 allows physical switching between a print and scan function (see Abstract, FIG. 3 and 4, and col. 4, lines 62-65). Since printer head 302 and scanner head 303 can only be attached to apparatus 100 one at a time by connector 304, they are never connected directly to each other. Furthermore, the printer-scanner composite apparatus is always connected to PC 402 to receive instructions. Thus, printer head 302 and apparatus 100 are never connected directly only to scanner head 303. Moreover, apparatus 100, which includes printer head 302, is directly connected to PC 402 and not indirectly connected to PC 402 via scanner head 303, as required for correspondence to claims 13 and 20, as amended.

Since Yamamoto, Maeda, and Danknick do not disclose or suggest each and every element of claims 13 and 20, these claims and claims 14 and 15 dependent thereon are not obvious over Yamamoto, Maeda and Danknick. The rejections of claims 13-15 and 20 under 35 USC 103(a) should therefore be withdrawn.

Conclusion

This application is now believed to be in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned to resolve any issues that remain

Appl. No. 10/783,214
Amdt. dated April 23, 2008
Reply to Office Action of January 24, 2008

Atty. Ref. 81710.0266
Customer No. 26021

after entry of this amendment. Any fees due in connection with this response may be charged to our Deposit Account No. 50-1314.

Respectfully submitted,
HOGAN & HARTSON L.L.P.

Date: April 23, 2008

By: 

Troy M. Schmelzer
Registration No. 36,667
Attorney for Applicant(s)

1999 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 1400
Los Angeles, California 90067
Phone: 310-785-4600
Fax: 310-785-4601